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GOVERNOR

SYLVIA LUKE
LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR

LUIS P. SALAVERIA
DIRECTOR

SABRINA NASIR
DEPUTY DIRECTOR

EMPLOYEES' RETIREMENT SYSTEM
HAWAII EMPLOYER-UNION HEALTH BENEFITS TRUST FUND
OFFICE OF THE PUBLIC DEFENDER

STATE OF HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF BUDGET AND FINANCE
Ka 'Oihana Mālama Mo'ohelu a Kālā
P.O. BOX 150
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96810-0150

ADMINISTRATIVE AND RESEARCH OFFICE
BUDGET, PROGRAM PLANNING AND MANAGEMENT DIVISION
FINANCIAL ADMINISTRATION DIVISION
OFFICE OF FEDERAL AWARDS MANAGEMENT

**TESTIMONY BY LUIS P. SALAVERIA
DIRECTOR, DEPARTMENT OF BUDGET AND FINANCE
TO THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION
ON
HOUSE BILL NO. 1653**

**January 30, 2024
2:00 p.m.
Room 309 and Videoconference**

RELATING TO EDUCATION

The Department of Budget and Finance (B&F) opposes this bill.

House Bill No. 1653 provides bargaining unit (BU) (5), teachers and educational officers who have completed a year's satisfactory service and who have complied with the other requirements of Sections 302A-602 to 302A-639 and 302A-701, as applicable, an annual increment negotiated pursuant to a collective bargaining (CB) agreement. In addition, the bill provides longevity step increases for teachers and educational officers who have served satisfactorily for three years in their maximum increment step or in any longevity step and who have complied with the other requirements of Sections 302A-602 to 302A-639.

B&F opposes this measure because it is contrary to the CB process. This measure preferentially directs the outcome of CB negotiations for select BUs.

While the Legislature has the authority to set the scope of CB, the Legislature did this in setting up a process in Chapter 89, HRS. This bill disrupts that process due to its partial return to directly legislated wages and working conditions for public employees.

Thank you for your consideration of our comments.



STATE OF HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
KA 'OIHANA HO'ONA'AUAO
P.O. BOX 2360
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96804

Date: 01/30/2024
Time: 02:00 PM
Location: 309 VIA VIDEOCONFERENCE
Committee: House Education

Department: Education

Person Testifying: Keith T. Hayashi, Superintendent of Education

Title of Bill: HB 1653 RELATING TO EDUCATION.

Purpose of Bill: Pursuant to a collective bargaining agreement negotiated for Bargaining Unit (5), provides annual salary step increases for public school teachers and educational officers who have completed a year's satisfactory service and comply with specified requirements.

Department's Position:

The Hawaii State Department of Education (Department) supports HB 1653.

The Department appreciates the Legislature's efforts to improve the Department's ability to attract and retain quality employees to support Hawaii's K-12 public schools. Providing automatic step increases in teacher and educational officer salaries for each year of satisfactory service completed would provide a powerful tool to achieve that goal.

The Department provides the following comments for the Legislature's consideration.

The measure explicitly addresses the Legislature's intent to provide automatic step increases for both teachers and educational officers for each year of satisfactory service. Bargaining Unit 5 (BU5) covers more than just teachers, but also includes librarians, counselors, and resource teachers. The Department believes that adjusting the language to include all members of BU5 would be appropriate.

Additionally, the measure also includes mention of educational officers, who are covered by Bargaining Unit 6 (BU6). The Department believes adding language

specifically referencing BU6 would be appropriate to maintain consistency;

Finally, the Department believes that all of its employees serve in equal, yet diverse roles to help ensure student achievement. In light of this, the Department encourages the Legislature to consider including all other Bargaining Units to acknowledge the tremendous team effort it takes to ensure a successful Department. The Department urges the Legislature to consider including step movements for the following Bargaining Units to the measure:

- o Bargaining Unit 1- Blue-Collar Non-Supervisory Employees
- o Bargaining Unit 2- Blue-Collar Supervisory Employees
- o Bargaining Unit 3- White-Collar Non-Supervisory Employees
- o Bargaining Unit 4- White-Collar Supervisory Employees
- o Bargaining Unit 9- Registered Professional Nurses
- o Bargaining Unit 10- Institutional, Health, and Correction Officers
- o Bargaining Unit 13- Professional and Scientific Employees

The Department notes that the Hawaii Revised Statutes, Chapter 89-9 requires negotiations between the employer and exclusive representative with respect to wages. The exclusive representatives of the Department's bargaining units, with the exception of BU5, are poised to enter into negotiations with the State of Hawaii (employer) within the next year for new collective bargaining agreements, which end on June 30, 2025.

Should the Legislature proceed with authorizing this measure, the Department respectfully requests that the Legislature simultaneously include the funds necessary to implement these step movements into the Department's base budget going forward.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on HB 1653.

JOSH GREEN, M. D.
GOVERNOR

SYLVIA LUKE
LT. GOVERNOR



WILBERT S. HOLCK
CHIEF NEGOTIATOR

STATE OF HAWAII
OFFICE OF COLLECTIVE BARGAINING
EXECUTIVE OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR
235 S. BERETANIA STREET, SUITE 1201
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96813-2437

Statement of
WILBERT S. HOLCK
Chief Negotiator, Office of Collective Bargaining

Before the
HOUSE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION
Tuesday, January 30, 2024
2:00 p.m.
State Capitol, Conference Room 309

In consideration of
HB 1653, Relating to Education

(WRITTEN TESTIMONY ONLY)

Chair Woodson, Vice-Chair La Chica and the members of the committee:

The Office of Collective Bargaining (OCB) respectfully opposes H.B. 1653, which provides annual salary step increases for public school teachers and educational officers who have completed a year's satisfactory service and comply with specified requirements.

Wages, hours, and other terms and conditions of employment are subject to negotiations as provided in Hawaii Revised Statutes, §89-9. We note that the 2016 legislature agreed when nearly identical provisions were repealed.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony on this measure.



TESTIMONY FROM THE DEMOCRATIC PARTY OF HAWAII

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

JANUARY 30, 2024

HB 1653, RELATING TO EDUCATION

POSITION: SUPPORT

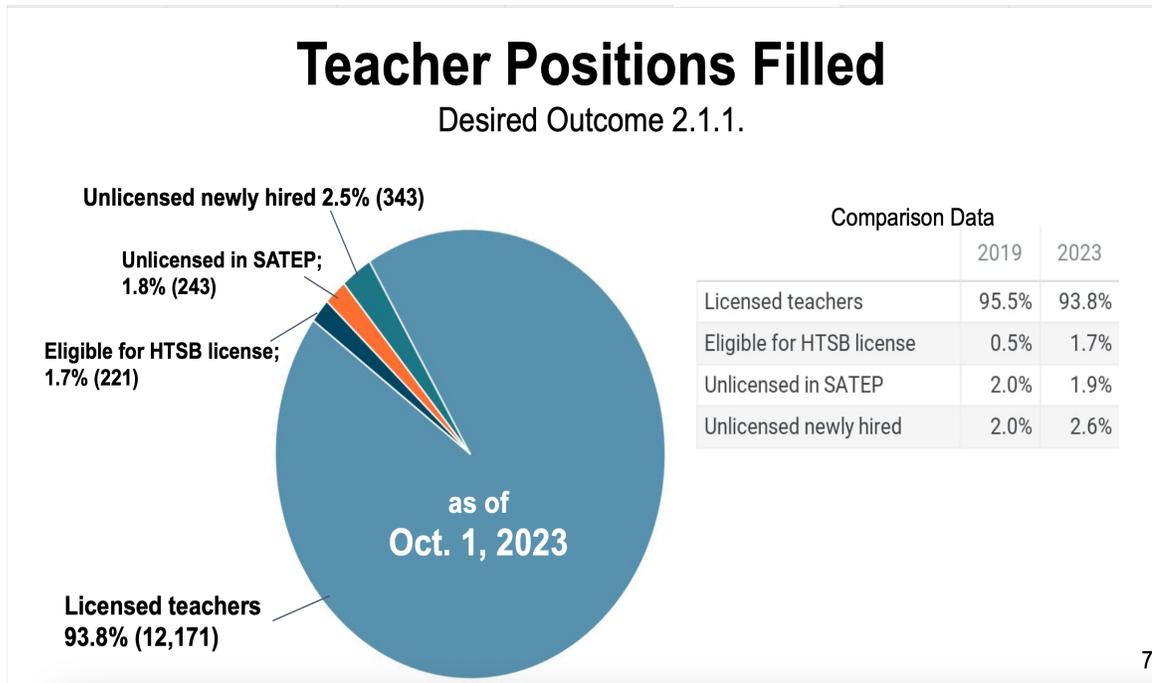
The Democratic Party of Hawaii **supports** HB 1653, relating to education. Pursuant to the “Education” section of the official Democratic Party of Hawaii platform, the party believes, “Educators should be paid professional salaries to ensure that all children are taught by qualified teachers.”

Teachers are the most important professionals in increasing student achievement. According to numerous studies, however, Hawaii’s average teacher salaries are the lowest in the nation when adjusted for cost of living. A 2020 study conducted by APA Consulting on behalf of the Hawaii Department of Education found that when compared with other high-cost geographic locations, Hawaii teachers are paid \$7,700 to \$26,000 less than their peers in school districts with similar costs of living, depending on length of service.

While that pay gap is decreasing because of the State Legislature’s effort to fund differential pay increases and resolve salary compression in recent years, teachers are still underpaid compared to other professions that require a similar level of education. **Restoring guaranteed annual increments, more commonly known as “step increases,” would significantly help to alleviate that gap.**

Low teacher pay adversely impacts the State’s ability to recruit and retain quality classroom leaders. **While Gov. Josh Green recently said in his State of**

the State address that the teacher shortage had been cut by 50 percent, this figure is not entirely accurate. In fact, by other measures, the teacher shortage is getting worse. According to a presentation provided to the Hawai'i Board of Education by DOE officials on January 13, 2024, **the number of licensed teachers employed by our state's public school system has fallen from 95.5 percent of total positions in 2019 to 93.8 percent in 2023.**



As of October 1, 2023, the department had over 800 teaching positions that were filled by educators who fell into the categories of unlicensed newly hired (emergency hires), unlicensed but in the process of completing a state approved teacher education program, or eligible for a teaching license that has not yet been acquired. **While the DOE may only be actively recruiting for roughly 200 positions, that is almost certainly because many positions are currently filled by unlicensed teachers and emergency hires.**

Increasing teacher compensation, as this bill modestly proposes, improves educator retention. A Stanford University analysis found that raising teacher wages by 10 percent reduces high school dropout rates by 3 to 4 percent. Similarly, a Florida study showed that pay raises reduced teacher attrition by as much as 25 percent for hard-to-fill subject areas, with children's learning growth gaining from more exposure to experienced educators. When our state implemented differential

pay increases for special education, Hawaiian immersion, and hard-to-staff positions, vacancies in those areas fell dramatically.

To deliver the schools our keiki deserve, we must pay teachers what they're worth. It is the least we can do for the hardworking educators on whom our children's and our society's future depends.

Mahalo nui loa,

Kris Coffield

Co-Chair, Legislative Committee
(808) 679-7454
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Abby Simmons

Co-Chair, Legislative Committee
(808) 352-6818
abbyalana808@gmail.com

Aloha Honorable Chair Woodson and the Education Committee,

My name is John Fitzpatrick and I am a teacher at Kūlanihāko'i High School. I am in strong support of HB 1653 which would provide automatic step increases to our educators who work extremely hard in order to help our haumana grow into well rounded and empowered citizens.

According to our contract Article XX- Salaries section N it recognizes that annual step increases is a “viable recruiting and retention tool.” In this last contract negotiation the money man representing the executive branch said there was no money to provide annual step increases and that is why our current contract has step increases every other year. **I am not sure how \$900,000,000 was placed into a rainy day fund but the DOE could not find a way to fund annual step increases.**

I do have to ask if Superintendent Hayashi put in a request during budget to ask for the appropriate monies to fund annual step increases.

- N.** The parties recognize that annual incremental step movements are a viable recruiting and retention tool. Teachers who are not at the top of the salary schedule and who have effective evaluations shall move to the next highest step of the corresponding class at the beginning of each school year. Annual incremental step movements are subject to funding.

After eight years of teaching I am currently on Step 9 because of your hard work obtaining reprising which fixed the fact that teachers were denied annual step increases or any steps at all. **By the end of our current contract any teacher that started in 2021-2022 and before and not at the top of the salary schedule will be compressed by three years** (No step increase last year because we did not negotiate a contract, No step increase in the 2024-2025 school year, and no step increase in the 2026-2027 school year).

I have been a head faculty representative at Maui Waena and often talk with our new teachers. When they are recruited they are shown our salary schedule and assume there are annual step increases. Last year I educated two of our new teachers that moved from Chicago that we do not have annual step increases and they were appalled because teachers in Chicago get annual step increases so they assumed we did too. They are considering moving back to the mainland because we do not have annual step increases. Annual step increases are a “**viable recruiting and retention**” tool because we have to provide competitive wages across the country in order to retain our new hires.

Not being able to recruit and retain highly qualified teachers severely affects our haumana (students) and keiki (children). There are so many vacancies that our students do not get the basic skills they need by the time they get to the high school level. **Often times students get long term subs that only have a high school diploma or even worse, they have to go to the cafeteria because there is no one to watch their class.**

We can see that students really need highly effective, qualified, and caring teachers in order to recover from the COVID pandemic. Highly skilled and experienced teachers affect students behaviors and their academic skills.

I am currently teaching integrated science to 9th graders and we had a lab that required them to calculate averages. Many of my students did not know what an average was so I had to teach them how to calculate an average and what it was. This is a skill they would have likely learned in 5th grade and definitely during middle school.

Last week one of my students said to me **“Mister, I don’t know why they** (referring to a group of students that were really loud and disrespectful) **are so loud and disrespectful to you and our class. You are the best science teacher I have ever had. All my science teachers in middle school dipped out on us.”**

In our salary schedule, **Exhibit B**, there are 12 steps to get to the top of the pay scale. According to our last three contracts, if teachers are lucky, we will get a step every other year. This means it will take a teacher 24 years to get to the top of the salary schedule and another 5 years to obtain their high 5 for retirement.

If this bill passes we will be at the top of the pay scale in 11 years and be able to retire at the top of the pay scale in 16 years instead of 29. This looks far less daunting and can definitely be used as a recruiting and retention tool so our haumana has a highly qualified teacher in everyone of their classrooms.

I agree with HGEA and would whole heartedly support out principals and vice principals getting annual step increases as well. We need highly qualified and skilled principals and they work extremely hard trying to run schools that are underfunded and do not have all the puzzle pieces. Imagine having 20 teaching classroom positions at your school and you could only find 15 teachers to teach your students. Then you recruit 2 teachers from the mainland. One month in one of your two recruits leaves because they could not find a room to rent. Then at the end of the semester the other teacher leaves to a be a host or hostess, a videographer on a boat, or a flight attendant because they can make more money with less responsibilities. These types of situations principals are

dealing with every day, every week, and every month. They deserve a pay raise for even trying to solve an impossible puzzle because they cannot get all of the puzzle pieces.

I am hopeful annual step increases will help teachers stay past 5 years and dedicate their lives to the profession.

If we have annual step increases I am hopeful during negotiations we can focus on raising the salary schedule to be more competitive with other professions so we can recruit teachers from Hawaii with our grow your own program. [Average Teacher Salary Lower Today Than Ten Years Ago, NEA Report Finds](#) On average a teacher from Hawai'i makes 86% of what other professions that require a similar degree make (Economic Policy Institute, 2023). In order to attract teachers we need to have a competitive salary with other professions.

Our last contract gave a brand new teacher coming out of college a 2% raise which doesn't even come close to keeping up with inflation caused by the Covid pandemic. New teachers may live in their cars, in a tent, on other teachers couches, and have to survive off of instant ramen.

I do foresee some saying that this should occur during contract negotiations and bargaining. I am not sure how we break the cycle of our employer saying there is no money for annual step increases during bargaining and us coming to the legislature to ask for annual step increases. I am just a teacher and not a lawyer, but an alternative to this bill would possibly be to put money in the state budget earmarked for principal, teacher, and educational assistants annual step increases so our employer can no longer say there is no funding and can re-open our contract and provide a step increase for last year, the 2024-2025 school year, and the 2026-2027 school year.

Please support our haumana, our future, and help us address the teacher shortage crisis. Pass HB 1653 so we can work on having highly qualified teacher in every classroom, principals no longer have impossible puzzles, and our keiki can catch up after the learning loss from the pandemic and the Lahaina fires.

Mahalo,
John Fitzpatrick

Exhibit B: 2023-2024 Teacher Pay Scale

EXHIBIT B

TEACHER'S ANNUAL RATE SALARY SCHEDULE (10-MONTH)

Effective the First Work Day of the 2023-2024 School Year

	CLASS II TEACHER		CLASS III TEACHER		CLASS IV TEACHER		CLASS V TEACHER		CLASS VI TEACHER		CLASS VII TEACHER	
Initial Classification	BA		BA+30 or MA								Doctorate	
Reclassification			Class II + 15 credits		Class III + 15 credits		Class IV + 15 credits		Class V + 15 credits		Class VI + 15 credits	
14B ⁵	T02-14B	73,843	T03-14B	79,750	T04-14B	82,940	T05-14B	86,257	T06-14B	89,708	T07-14B	95,090
14A ⁵	T02-14A	69,663	T03-14A	75,235	T04-14A	78,246	T05-14A	81,375	T06-14A	84,631	T07-14A	89,707
14 ⁵	T02-14	67,633	T03-14	73,044	T04-14	75,967	T05-14	79,005	T06-14	82,164	T07-14	87,096
13 ⁵	T02-13	65,663	T03-13	70,916	T04-13	73,754	T05-13	76,703	T06-13	79,771	T07-13	84,558
12 ⁵	T02-12	63,751	T03-12	68,852	T04-12	71,607	T05-12	74,471	T06-12	77,448	T07-12	82,096
11 ⁵	T02-11	61,895	T03-11	66,847	T04-11	69,520	T05-11	72,300	T06-11	75,191	T07-11	79,702
10 ⁵	T02-10	60,090	T03-10	64,900	T04-10	67,494	T05-10	70,194	T06-10	73,000	T07-10	77,383
9 ⁵	T02-09	58,342	T03-09	63,009	T04-09	65,530	T05-09	68,151	T06-09	70,877	T07-09	75,130
8 ⁵	T02-08	56,643	T03-08	61,173	T04-08	63,618	T05-08	66,165	T06-08	68,811	T07-08	72,941
7 ⁵	T02-07	54,993	T03-07	59,392	T04-07	61,768	T05-07	64,238	T06-07	66,807	T07-07	70,816
6 ⁵	T02-06	53,391	T03-06	57,661	T04-06	59,969	T05-06	62,368	T06-06	64,861	T07-06	68,753
5 ⁵	T02-05	51,835	T03-05	55,982	T04-05	58,222	T05-05	60,549	T06-05	62,973	T07-05	66,750
(ENTRY LEVEL) 4 ⁵	T02-04	50,325	T03-04	54,351	T04-04	56,526	T05-04	58,785	T06-04	61,139	T07-04	64,806

⁵Step 4 (Entry Level) have not completed a State Approved Teacher Education Program (SATEP). Steps 5-14B must have completed a SATEP and be eligible for a license.

HB-1653

Submitted on: 1/28/2024 9:11:01 AM

Testimony for EDN on 1/30/2024 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Michael EKM Olderr	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support this bill. We can sponsor as many programs, career pipelines, and incentives as we want, but if we want to keep teachers here, we have to pay them more. It is that simple.



HOUSE BILL 1653, RELATING TO EDUCATION

JANUARY 30, 2024 · EDN HEARING

POSITION: Support.

RATIONALE: The Democratic Party of Hawai'i Education Caucus **supports** HB 1653, relating to education, which, pursuant to a collective bargaining agreement negotiated for bargaining unit (5), provides annual salary step increases for public school teachers and educational officers who have completed a year's satisfactory service and comply with specified requirements.

Teachers are the most important professionals in increasing student achievement. According to numerous studies, however, Hawai'i's average teacher salaries are the lowest in the nation when adjusted for cost of living. A 2020 study conducted by APA Consulting on behalf of the Hawai'i Department of Education found that when compared with other high-cost geographic locations, Hawai'i teachers are paid \$7,700 to \$26,000 less than their peers in school districts with similar costs of living, depending on length of service.

While that pay gap is decreasing because of the State Legislature's effort to fund differential pay increases and resolve salary compression in recent years, teachers are still underpaid compared to other professions that require a similar level of education. **Restoring guaranteed annual increments, more commonly known as "step increases," would significantly help to alleviate that gap.**

Additionally, low teacher pay adversely impacts the State's ability to recruit and retain quality classroom leaders. **While Gov. Josh Green recently said in his State of the State address that the teacher shortage had been cut by 50 percent, this figure is not entirely accurate.** In fact, by other measures, the teacher shortage is getting worse. According to a presentation provided to the Hawai'i Board of Education by DOE officials on January 13, 2024, **the number of licensed teachers employed by our state's public school system has fallen from 95.5 percent of total positions in 2019 to 93.8 percent in 2023.**

As of October 1, 2023, the department had over 800 teaching positions that were filled by educators who fell into the categories of unlicensed newly hired (emergency hires), unlicensed but in the process of completing a state approved teacher education program, or eligible for a teaching license that has not yet been acquired. **While the DOE may only be actively recruiting for roughly 200 positions, that is almost certainly because many positions are currently filled by unlicensed teachers and emergency hires.**

Strengthening teacher compensation, as this bill modestly proposes, improves educator retention. A Stanford University analysis found that raising teacher wages by 10 percent reduces high school dropout rates by 3 to 4 percent. Similarly, a Florida study showed that pay raises reduced teacher attrition by as much as 25 percent for hard-to-fill subject areas, with children's learning growth gaining from more exposure to experienced educators. When our state implemented differential pay increases for special education, Hawaiian immersion, and hard-to-staff positions, vacancies in those areas fell dramatically.

To deliver the schools our keiki deserve, we must pay teachers what they're worth. It is the least we can do for the hardworking educators on whom our children's and our society's future depends.

Kris Coffield · Chairperson, DPH Education Caucus · (808) 679-7454 · kriscoffield@gmail.com



TESTIMONY FROM THE DEMOCRATIC PARTY OF HAWAII LABOR CAUCUS

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION · JANUARY 30, 2024

HB 1653, RELATING TO EDUCATION

POSITION: SUPPORT

The Democratic Party of Hawai'i Labor Caucus **supports** HB 1653, relating to education. Teachers are the most important professionals in increasing student achievement. According to numerous studies, however, Hawai'i's average teacher salaries are the lowest in the nation when adjusted for cost of living. A 2020 study conducted by APA Consulting on behalf of the Hawai'i Department of Education found that when compared with other high-cost geographic locations, Hawai'i teachers are paid \$7,700 to \$26,000 less than their peers in school districts with similar costs of living, depending on length of service.

While that pay gap is decreasing because of the State Legislature's effort to fund differential pay increases and resolve salary compression in recent years, teachers are still underpaid compared to other professions that require a similar level of education. Restoring guaranteed annual increments, more commonly known as "step increases," would significantly help to alleviate that gap.

Additionally, low teacher pay adversely impacts the State's ability to recruit and retain quality classroom leaders. By some measures, the teacher shortage is getting worse. According to a presentation provided to the Hawai'i Board of Education by DOE officials on January 13, 2024, the number of licensed teachers employed by our state's public school system has fallen from 95.5 percent of total positions in 2019 to 93.8 percent in 2023.

As of October 1, 2023, the department had over 800 teaching positions that were filled by educators who fell into the categories of unlicensed newly hired

(emergency hires), unlicensed but in the process of completing a state approved teacher education program, or eligible for a teaching license that has not yet been acquired. While the DOE may only be actively recruiting for roughly 200 positions, that is almost certainly because many positions are currently filled by unlicensed teachers and emergency hires.

Strengthening teacher compensation, as this bill modestly proposes, improves educator retention. A Stanford University analysis found that raising teacher wages by 10 percent reduces high school dropout rates by 3 to 4 percent. Similarly, a Florida study showed that pay raises reduced teacher attrition by as much as 25 percent for hard-to-fill subject areas, with children's learning growth gaining from more exposure to experienced educators. When our state implemented differential pay increases for special education, Hawaiian immersion, and hard-to-staff positions, vacancies in those areas fell dramatically.

To deliver the schools our keiki deserve, we must pay teachers what they're worth. It is the least we can do for the hardworking educators on whom our children's and our society's future depends.

Mahalo,

Jason Bradshaw

Chairperson, Democratic Party of Hawai'i Labor Caucus



HAWAII GOVERNMENT EMPLOYEES ASSOCIATION

AFSCME Local 152, AFL-CIO

RANDY PERREIRA, Executive Director • Tel: 808.543.0011 • Fax: 808.528.0922

The Thirty-Second Legislature, State of Hawaii
House of Representatives
Committee on Education

Testimony by
Hawaii Government Employees Association

January 30, 2024

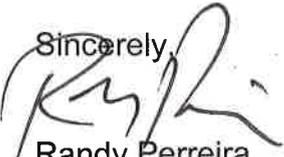
H.B. 1653 — RELATING TO EDUCATION

The Hawaii Government Employees Association, AFSCME Local 152, AFL-CIO wishes to provide comments on H.B. 1653 which seeks to provide annual salary step increases for public school teachers and educational officers who have completed a year's satisfactory service and comply with specified requirements pursuant to a collective bargaining agreement negotiated for Bargaining Unit (5).

During the 2022 Legislative Session, lawmakers appropriated funds to compensate teachers for their years of service in the classroom and correct their salary compression. While this appropriation is well deserved for the thousands of teachers who saw their compensation adjusted permanently, the HGEA represents over 27,000 other government employees whose working conditions, compensation plans, and benefits are equally deserving of the same attention and consideration.

We believe all government employees are as significant as the teachers and urge the legislature to take a more holistic and comprehensive approach to its workforce plan and come up with multiple solutions to increase government workers pay and benefits to make it both attractive and competitive in the current job market. **Restoring step movements for only two groups of employees is unfair to the rest of the state's workforce, therefore if the legislature would like to restore the automatic step movement plan, then we urge the legislature to consider including ALL employees across 15 bargaining units.**

Thank you for the opportunity to submit comments for H.B. 1653.

Sincerely,

Randy Perreira
Executive Director



HAWAII STATE TEACHERS ASSOCIATION

Teaching Today for Hawaii's Tomorrow



1200 Ala Kapuna Street • Honolulu, Hawaii 96819
Tel: (808) 833-2711 • Fax: (808) 839-7106 • Web: www.hsta.org

Osa Tui, Jr.
President

Logan Okita
Vice President

Lisa Thompson
Secretary-Treasurer

Ann Mahi
Executive Director

TESTIMONY TO THE HAWAII HOUSE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

Item: **HB1653 - Relating to Education**
Position: **Support**
Hearing: **January 30, 2024, 2:00 p.m., Conference Room 309**
Submitter: **Osa Tui, Jr. – President, Hawai'i State Teachers Association**

Chair Woodson, Vice Chair La Chica, and members of the committee,

The Hawai'i State Teachers Association **supports** HB1653. This bill, pursuant to a collective bargaining agreement negotiated for Bargaining Unit (5), provides annual salary step increases for public school teachers and educational officers who have completed a year's satisfactory services and comply with specified requirements.

HSTA will note that "longevity steps" on the salary schedule were phased out of the Unit 5 collective bargaining agreement at the start of the 1989-1990 school year.

Article XX of the current Unit 5 collective bargaining agreement has language that states:

The parties recognize that annual incremental step movements are a viable recruiting and retention tool. Teachers who are not at the top of the salary schedule and who have effective evaluations shall move to the next highest step of the corresponding class at the beginning of each school year. Annual incremental step movements are subject to funding.

This bill, if passed and funded, will satisfy the last sentence above and go a long way towards recruitment and retention of Hawai'i public school educators. As such, the Hawai'i State Teachers Association asks your committee to **support** this bill.

LATE



**Chair Woodson
Vice Chair La Chica**

House Committee on Education

**Tuesday, January 30, 2024
2:00 PM**

TESTIMONY IN STRONG SUPPORT OF HB1653 RELATING TO EDUCATION

Aloha Chair Woodson, Vice Chair La Chica, Members of the House Committee on Education,

The Hawai‘i State Youth Commission was first created through Act 106 in 2018, “to advise the governor and legislature on the effects of legislative policies, needs, assessments, priorities, programs, and budgets concerning the youth of the State.” The Hawai‘i State Youth Commission’s Education legislative committee is in strong support of **HB1653**.

As mentioned in the bill, teacher salaries in Hawai‘i are the lowest in the nation when adjusted for cost of living in the state. To focus on the education of Hawai‘i’s youth, we must sufficiently address the lack of fair compensation that Hawai‘i’s teachers are receiving. From the 2020-21 school year, the Hawai‘i Department of Education reported a teacher retention rate of 51%.¹ Reports from the Hawai‘i State Teachers Association identify the need for competitive compensation to retain teachers and ensure that Hawai‘i’s students can benefit from consistent

1

<https://www.hawaiipublicschools.org/VisionForSuccess/AdvancingEducation/StrategicPlan/Pages/SPDR-2tr.aspx>

high-quality education.² When teachers stay in the profession for longer, they gain valuable experience and expertise to utilize for each new generation of students. Dedicated teachers who have been doing so already deserve pay that can support a stable livelihood in Hawai'i. Salaries with annual increases incentives the profession, which works towards filling the teacher shortage gap that has created inconsistencies and gaps in learning for students across Hawai'i.³

As the Youth Commission recognizes the importance of education in facilitating the next generation of thinkers, innovators, and leaders, we recognize the importance of teachers who guide the path for students to do so. The significance of this role has been long overdue for increased compensation. Therefore, the Hawai'i State Youth Commission strongly urges the committee to **PASS HB1653**.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify,

The Hawai'i State Youth Commission
hawaiiistateyc@gmail.com

²

<https://www.hawaiipublicradio.org/local-news/2022-01-22/hawaii-teacher-retention-department-of-education>

³ <https://www.hsta.org/crisis/>

HB-1653

Submitted on: 1/30/2024 10:52:15 AM

Testimony for EDN on 1/30/2024 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Fenton K lee	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Testimony in Support of Hawaii House Bill 1653 (HB1653)



To the Honorable Members of the Hawaii State Legislature:



Support for HB1653 - Relating to the Salaries of Teachers and Educational Officers

I am writing to express my strong support for House Bill 1653, which seeks to provide annual salary step increases for public school teachers and educational officers in Hawaii. This bill, pursuant to a collective bargaining agreement for Bargaining Unit (5), is a crucial step in recognizing and valuing the indispensable role of educators in our society.

1. Recognition of Educators' Contributions: Teachers and educational officers play a vital role in shaping the future of our children and the broader community. By providing annual salary step increases, HB1653 acknowledges their dedication and hard work.

2. Addressing Cost of Living and Retention Issues: The cost of living in Hawaii is among the highest in the nation. Adjusting salaries to reflect these economic realities is essential for retaining quality educators and preventing turnover, which can disrupt the educational environment for students.

3. Investing in Quality Education: By ensuring that educators are fairly compensated, HB1653 invests in the quality of education in Hawaii. Satisfied and well-compensated teachers are more likely to be engaged and effective in their roles, which directly benefits students.

4. Positive Impact on Recruitment: Enhanced salary structures make the profession more attractive to potential educators. This is crucial for addressing teacher shortages and ensuring that Hawaii's students have access to the best possible educators.

In conclusion, House Bill 1653 is a necessary and positive step towards supporting our educators and, by extension, our students. I strongly urge its passage into law, reflecting our commitment to education and those who make it possible.

Thank you for considering my views on this important matter.

Sincerely,

Fenton Kaulana Lee